

### **Abstract Of The Invention**

An apparatus to enable the automatic release of a railway vehicle hand brake system from either side of the vehicle is provided. The apparatus comprises a source of fluid pressure engageable with the vehicle. A release cylinder, which is operable by fluid pressure, is connected to a hand brake mechanism that is engageable with a brake system disposed on the vehicle. A valve means is connected intermediate the source of fluid pressure and the release cylinder. This valve means causes the release cylinder to release the hand brake system. A first valve actuation means is disposed on a first side of the vehicle and is connected intermediate the valve means and the source of fluid pressure. This first valve actuation means causes the valve means to initiate communication of fluid pressure from the source of fluid pressure to the release cylinder. A second valve actuation means is disposed on an opposed second side of the vehicle and is connected intermediate the valve means and the source of fluid pressure. This second valve actuation means also causes the valve means to initiate communication of fluid pressure from the source of fluid pressure to the release cylinder.